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# U.S. Tells Why It Barred Soviet Olympic Official

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WASHINGTON, March 2 — The State Department said today that it had refused to grant a visa to a Soviet Olympic official for reasons of "internal security."

The Soviet official, Oleg N. Yermishkin, had applied for a visa to serve as an "Olympics attaché" in Los Angeles for six months before and during the Summer Games there.

A senior State Department official said privately that Mr. Yermishkin, who had been a young second secretary assigned to the press section of the Soviet Embassy in the mid-1970's, was a known agent of the K.G.B., the Soviet security and intelligence service.

John Hughes, the department spokesman, said that when Soviet officials informally submitted Mr. Yermishkin's name in December for the Los Angeles assignment, the American Embassy in Moscow told them that he would be turned down because of his background and that another name should be submitted. But Mr. Hughes said the Russians had refused to withdraw Mr. Yermishkin's name. It was submitted formally on Feb. 10, he said, and rejected on Tuesday.

## He Would Have Immunity

Mr. Hughes said Mr. Yermishkin had been in the United States in November as a part of a delegation that went to Los Angeles for talks about arrangements for the Olympics. He said factors taken into account in denying the visa were the length of his planned stay and the fact that he would have full dip-

lomatic immunity.

He said the United States would live up to its commitment to permit visas for all Soviet team members for Los Angeles, and to permit an attaché to accompany them, provided "his activities will be solely related to the Olympics."

In Los Angeles on Thursday, Peter V. Ueberroth, the president of the Olympic Organizing Committee for the city, said, "We are deeply troubled by the timing of this denial, which appears to be inefficient and unfair."

Mr. Ueberroth said he was not quarreling with the decision to deny the visa, but rather objected to the apparent delay in doing so. He said Mr. Yermishkin was supposed to arrive in Los Angeles today.

But Mr. Hughes blamed the Soviet Union for the timing, repeating that Moscow knew in December that Mr. Yermishkin would not be permitted to stay in Los Angeles.

Under the complicated system by which the Soviet Union and the United States bar parts of their country to each other's diplomats, sections of Los Angeles are normally off limits to Soviet officials. Los Angeles International Airport, for instance, is in the prohibited zone. But for the Olympics, the State Department agreed to lift the ban and to permit Aeroflot planes, now barred from this country, to fly chartered flights to bring athletes, officials and fans from the Soviet Union.

One State Department official said the denial of the visa was part of what



Associated Press

Oleg N. Yermishkin as he toured facilities for the Olympic Games in Los Angeles late last year.

he called "the intricate game" between the K.G.B. and the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Central Intelligence Agency. He said that by denying the visa, "we sent a message to the K.G.B. that we were in no mood to let one of their guys in on the Olympics ticket, once we knew who he was."